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Southeast Perspective

a publication of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

Clergy Alerts

Cluster meetings will be held in November to discuss *Covenant for Renewal* — a congregational needs assessment resource developed by Rev. Fred Coulter, Conference Associate for Congregational Renewal and Development. Watch for details in the November issue of *Southeast Perspective*.



Congregational historian Dr. Harold F. Worthley, Director of the Congregational Library in Boston, will present two free lectures at Piedmont College in Demorest, Georgia, October 19-20. The first lecture, "A Seminar for Local Church Historians and Archivists," may be of interest to *your church's historian*. Call 706/778 3000 for details.



Seminar and workshop registration
information available from the Conference office:

- *When the Honeymoon is Over: 18 Months into the Ministry*. The third edition of this popular workshop for pastors, sponsored by Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, will be held November 17-19.
- *Consultation XXIII on Parish Ministry*, to be held in Miami Beach January 5-9, 1998. This year's theme: *Finding Your Way — The Pastor as Artist*.
- *Small Membership Churches: Forging Creative Leadership for the Future*, a conference to be held in Chapel Hill, NC January 26-28, 1998 — sponsored by The Duke Endowment with The Alban Institute, The J.M. Osmond Center and Duke Divinity School.
- *Evangelism Connections '98*, jointly sponsored by seven mainline denominations, will be held in Atlanta April 17-18, 1998



Also available from the Conference office:

- *Impact*, the quarterly newsletter from the UCC Commission on Development
- *Glimpses: What Full Communion May Mean to You*, occasional papers from the Lutheran-Reformed Coordinating Committee
- Results of the annual salary study compiled by The Pension Boards of the UCC



FREE CHOIR ROBES!

More than 30 cream-colored adult robes are free for the asking from St. John's UCC in Cullman, Alabama. Call 205/734 0344 for more information.



Has your church ordered materials for the November Hunger Action Fund offering?

Rev. Dick Sales named Conference Associate

The first weekend in October marked an important turning point in the ministries of the Southeast Conference. On Sunday, October 5, Rev. Richard W. Sales retired from his pulpit at Pilgrim Congregational UCC in Birmingham after nearly ten years. The next morning, he officially joined the staff of the Southeast Conference as Conference Associate for Mission Development and UCC Identity.

Of course, Dick is no stranger to the Conference — he has served in a variety of capacities, including Stewardship Chair, Vice Moderator, and most recently, Moderator of the Conference. In his new post, one of three one-third Conference Associate positions, Dick will promote the UCC identity across the Southeast, help Conference congregations remain connected with the greater mission of the UCC, and work to create ecumenical mission partnerships locally, nationally, and globally. Dick's experience on the mission field makes him an ideal choice for a job that has as its focus the development and interpretation of mission across the Southeast.

Dick began his ministry at First Congregational Church in Middletown, Connecticut in 1956, after receiving his first of three degrees from Chicago Theological Seminary. The next year, however, he left the United States for an extended career on the mission field in Africa under the auspices of the UCBWM, serving in South Africa, Botswana and Zambia.

During his years abroad, Dick returned to Chicago twice to complete first a Masters degree, then a Doctor of Theology. He returned "for good" in 1986, and accepted a call to pastor the congregation at Pilgrim in 1988.

Dick is joined in his role by Rev. Bennie R. Liggins, a Chaplain and Lt. Colonel in the United States Air Force. Currently serving as Director for Professional Continuing Education and Student Selections at the USAF Chaplain Service Institute at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama, Bennie began his career in ministry in 1986, when he graduated from Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, and received a chaplain's commission. In the Air Force, Bennie has served across the United States and in Italy,

returning to Atlanta in 1994 for post-graduate studies at Emory.

Over the coming year, Bennie will consult with Dick, helping to shape Mission Development in the Southeast Conference. His experience in the armed forces, working among women and men representing a range of ages and backgrounds, will help the Conference identify ways to reach out in new directions in the years ahead.

For the time being, Dick's will be the face you see in churches and at Conference events. When he's not out on the road, he can be found in his office at Greater Birmingham Ministries. To reach him with questions — or a welcome — phone 205/326 6821. You can also leave a voice mail message for him at the Conference office: 800/807 1993, ext. 202.

What's Inside . . .

- Conference Clips
from across the SEC
- KYP
news from General Synod
- UCC Resources
music, materials and more
- OCWM in the SEC
the Iowa-Southeast partnership
- Board Highlights
important Aug/Sep actions
- Transitions
news of the SEC "family"
- The Conference Calendar
who's doing what, and when

Coming in November...

The Conference office goes high-tech with voice mail, e-mail and more!

Transitions

In this first edition, we're catching up on the events of the last several months — we'll include more "transitions" in the next issue. If you have an item to contribute, call the Conference Office at 800/807 1993.

Surgeries —

- Bev Calbert, wife of pastor Larry, on August 22
- SEC Board member Roy Bain, on August 28
- Pastor Ed Schneider, on October 7

Marriages —

- Dale Marshall to Shirley on July 31
- Chris Hester to Lorna in August
- Sandye Mullins to Sergei Grigorian, October 19

Ordinations —

- Angela Wright at Pilgrim Congregational in Birmingham on Oct 12; called to Garden City Cong.

Installations —

- Kristi Denham at Central Congregational UCC in Atlanta, on October 5
- Dwight Andrews, Elizabeth Clement, Andrew Young, John Pearson, Ginny Farrell, Robert Johnson and Norman Rates at Atlanta's First Congregational UCC in June
- Dennis Lott, Mountain Grove CCC in Hanceville

New Ministries —

- Chris Hester, St. John's in Cullman, Alabama
- William Lloyd, Trinity in Hampton, Georgia
- Michael Hoagland, 1st Congreg., Andalusia AL
- Michael Garrett, 1st Congreg., Montgomery

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OCWM in the SEC

Board Highlights

Executive Committee, August 29

- approved a contract for new computer, telephone and voice mail systems for the Conference office, to be installed in October
- approved calling Dick Sales as Conference Associate for Mission Development and UCC Identity
- approved to contract with Cheri Lovell to serve as Director for Conference Communications through July 1, 1998
- approved a three-year subsidy of \$21,000 to Covenant UCC in Columbia, South Carolina, to match a three-year gift of \$42,000 from the UCBHM
- expressed deep gratitude to contributors to the Make a Difference and Visions 91 fund drives, who made the Conference office upgrades possible
- agreed to explore extending a five-year lease, at \$1/year, to Miracle Temple — the congregation occupying the Carroll Heights property in Atlanta
- reviewed and approved a letter encouraging all congregations to become *tithing* congregations, contributing 10% of their annual budgets to OCWM
- reviewed the Board's 1997-98 Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives, and referred them back to the committee for further refinement
- the Finance Committee scheduled a meeting with members of the Heart of Georgia Fellowship regarding resolution of the outstanding issues resulting from the dissolution of the Fellowship

Board Meeting, September 12

- directed the Finance Committee to develop a brief description of the nature and purpose of each of the Conference's funds
- reviewed Committee appointments
- noted that Lala Allen signed over title to the land on which the Allen Retreat Center will be developed to the Southeast Conference — the Retreat Center Committee continues its planning work

Bulletin Insert — clip and photocopy

Sheltering, Comforting, Bringing Hope

For seven years, the Southeast Conference in mission partnership with the Iowa Conference, has organized work crews of twelve to eighteen people each year to bring the healing and caring presence of Christians to people in need. Over the years, crews have rehabilitated homes in poverty-stricken corners of Appalachia, repaired a church camp and made it accessible to people with disabilities, repaired homes following floods in Georgia and the Midwest, sent work crews to rebuild burned churches in the Southeast and Southern Conferences, and much more.

This year, the mission partnership work crews have just completed building "A Roof for Rosie" in Tunica, Mississippi — and they gathered for a celebration and dedication of Rosie's new home. On September 24, Rev. Sue Ingram, the Iowa Conference Minister, and Rev. Dick Sales, Southeast Conference Associate, represented their respective Conferences on this important and happy day.

Charlie Lord and Elizabeth Clement co-chair the Mission Partnership Committee, which includes Ben Welch and Trudy Braun from the Southeast Conference. We thank them for their dedication, and thank each of you who give to OCWM through your gifts to your local congregation and by encouraging your church's generous support of OCWM. Your giving has brought comfort to the afflicted, hope to the despairing, and shelter to the homeless.

If you're interested in getting involved in a hands-on way with the special ministry of the Iowa-Southeast partnership, call the Conference office at 800/807 1993.



WELCOME!

To a New Monthly Newsletter for Pastors and Church Leaders

Because communication is essential in every relationship — including the relationships between and among the churches, pastors, leaders, offices and staff of the our denomination — the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ has made a priority of enhancing communication across the Conference in the 1997-98 year. The newsletter you're holding represents the first fruit of that effort.

Welcome to *Southeast Perspective!*

Coordinating the Conference effort will be Cheri Lovell, Director for Conference Communications. Her task in the coming year will be to create and develop three major communications vehicles:

- 1** *Southeast Perspective* — a monthly, quick-reading newsletter designed to keep clergy and lay leaders up-to-date on national and Conference news, opportunities and resources. *Southeast Perspective* will be mailed to arrive the first of each month, (except in months when the quarterly Conference newsletter is published). See the articles below for more details.
- 2** *Southeast News* — the Conference's quarterly newsletter will be redesigned to a smaller format, similar to *Southeast Perspective*.
- 3** *SEC on the WWW* — the Conference's new Internet website, scheduled for launch on January 1, 1998. The website will include Conference news, on-line Bible studies and discussion groups, and more — including handy links to the national UCC homepage and other useful and interesting Web sites.

A Student In Care of the Georgia-South Carolina Association, Cheri is completing her third year at Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1982, and before returning to graduate school, owned her own freelance writing and marketing consulting business for five years. She served as Interim Parish Associate at Atlanta's Central Congregational UCC this past summer, and currently co-edits *Exchange*, Candler's monthly student opinion newspaper.

Of course, effective communication across the Southeast Conference is a two-way street — be sure to keep the Conference office informed of important news in your association, your church, and your life. We look forward to hearing from you!

DEPARTMENTS

- **Clergy Alerts**
news of special importance to pastors and church staff
- **KYP (Keeping You Posted)**
a summary of important news from the national UCC office
- **Board Highlights**
action and discussion by the Conference Board of Directors
- **Conference Clips**
news from around the Southeast Conference
- **UCC Resources**
notes about new and useful materials
- **OCWM in the SEC**
a ready-to-photocopy bulletin insert highlighting Our Church's Wider Mission funds at work in the Southeast Conference
- **Transitions**
important events in the lives of our Conference "family" members
- **The Conference Calendar**
who's doing what, and when

SHARE YOUR NEWS!

The Conference's first new communication piece, *Southeast Perspective*, has been created to keep pastors and lay leaders informed — not just with news highlights from Cleveland and the Atlanta office, but with news from the churches around the Conference. *So we need to hear from you!!*

We've tried to fill this first edition with plenty of information — but undoubtedly, we've left out something that's important to you. We'll ask your forgiveness in advance, and also ask you to be sure to keep the Conference office informed about events, concerns and opportunities that you'd like to share with your colleagues.

When you have input or ideas for *Southeast Perspective*, or if you have a suggestion for improving Conference communications, drop a note to Cheri Lovell at the Conference office:

756 W. Peachtree Street

Atlanta, GA 30308

Fax: 404/607 7939

or send a note via e-mail (temporary address):

clovell@emory.edu

Your input is more than valuable — it's essential!!

Keep those cards and letters coming!

We'd like to hear from you!

ABOUT THE MAILING LIST

Are your name and address correct on the mailing label? Would you prefer to receive your copy of *Southeast Perspective* at a different address? Do you have an e-mail address to add to our growing Conference e-mail directory? Perhaps you know someone who should receive this newsletter — let us know and we'll add them to the list!

Please add to the mailing list Change of information

Please add to the mailing list Change of information

NAME _____

NAME _____

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PHONE(S) _____

E-MAIL _____

E-MAIL _____

Lay leader Student In Care Other _____

Lay leader Student In Care Other _____

If you would prefer *not* to receive *Southeast Perspective*, please clip and return your mailing label to the Conference office.

IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS, INFORMATION FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

MAIL TO... UCC Southeast Conference, 756 W. Peachtree St., Atlanta GA 30308, Attn: Cheri Lovell

Conference Directory

THE CONFERENCE OFFICE

MAIL

756 W. Peachtree Street NW, Atlanta GA 30308

PHONE

404/607 1993 toll-free: 800/807 1993

FAX

404/607 7939

CONFERENCE STAFF

Rev. Timothy C. Downs
Conference Minister

voice mailbox: 211

Ms. Geraldine P. Ryons-Hudson
Administrative Assistant

voice mailbox: 210

Ms. Adrienne Laraway
Bookkeeper

voice mailbox: 212

Ms. Anne Ariail
Disaster Relief Coordinator

phone 912/742 4538
fax 912/742 3984

CONFERENCE ASSOCIATES

To leave a message on any Conference staff voice mailbox, call the Conference Office (use the toll-free number from outside the Atlanta area), and press the mailbox number you desire to reach when the voice mail system answers.

Conference Associate for...

- Congregational Renewal & Development
Rev. Fred W. Coulter
864 Weisgarber Road NW, Knoxville TN 37909-2779
phone 423/584 6133 ext. 25 voice mailbox: 201
- Spiritual Development & Community Building
Ms. Joyce C. Hollyday
1120 Greenbriar Circle, Decatur GA 30033
phone 404/292 2410 voice mailbox: 200
- Mission Development & UCC Identity
Rev. Richard W. Sales
705 47th Way South, Birmingham AL 35222-3435
phone 205/326 6821 voice mailbox: 202
- Director for Conference Communications
Ms. Cheri L. Lovell voice mailbox: TBA

Conference Staff e-mail addresses will be listed in the November issue of Southeast Perspective!

Conference Clips

KYYP

✓ Three women from the Southeast were honored at General Synod by the Coordinating Center for Women: Annie Neal, Ruth Peebles and Nancy Sales.

✓ The Toledo (OH) *Blade* featured Rev. Bob Kurtz, pastor of St. John's UCC in Cullman, Alabama, in a recent article, "Sportscaster leaves top post to take pulpit." Bob's was the first face seen when CNN went on the air back in 1980 — he took the high-profile job after years on the network fast-track. But the journey he'd begun in seminary called him back to the church, where he expects to stay.

✓ First Congregational UCC in Atlanta, one of the oldest African-American Congregational churches in the United States, celebrated its 130th Anniversary and Homecoming on September 21. *Congratulations!*

✓ Congratulations to Rev. Ted Braun of Pleasant Hill, Tennessee, whose critique of *The Bible Code* was published in the Crossville (TN) Chronicle.

✓ Congratulations to Dr. Walter Brueggemann of Columbia Theological Seminary, on the recent publication by Fortress Press of his latest book, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*.

✓ Nancy Kratz, widow of Rev. Willard Kratz, died in a nursing home in Fairfax, Virginia on September 9. Rev. and Mrs. Kratz served Pleasant Hill Community Church for two years, until Rev. Kratz's health necessitated his retirement in 1971. After his death, Mrs. Kratz served as the first activities director of Wharton Nursing Home.

Twice a year, United Church Press offers special packets of bulletin insert "originals" ready for copying, with information on books and other personal resources available from the Press — some ideal for Christmas gift-giving. For more information, call 216/736 3712.



The UCC Musicians Network began less than two years ago, but already boasts over 1100 members: ministers of music, organists and pianists, choir directors, pastors, composers — anyone interested in the role of music, worship and liturgy in the local church. To receive a copy of the Rev. Thomas Dipko's keynote address at General Synod, *Building Spirit and Faith Through Music*, or to become a member of the Network (and receive their quarterly newsletter *A Cappella*), call the UCC Music Office at 216/736 3703.



New resources will be available in December to complement *The New Century Hymnal*, including *The New Century Hymnal Companion*, a guide to the story, background and language of hymns, their writers and composers. Two editions of *The New Century Anthem Series* offer additional musical resources for choirs of all ages, and a loose-leaf

R braille version of the hymn texts is also available. For information on *New Century* resources, call Pilgrim Press/United Church Press at 800/537 3394.



E *United Church Windows* offers a flexible computerized information management system — especially designed for UCC churches — that integrates membership, attendance, pastoral care, contributions and financial data into one easy-to-learn and easy-to-use package. Create reports, statements, directories, birthday lists, and more! For a preview package, call 800/533 5227, or visit *Church Windows* online at www.churchwindows.com.



R Attention Internet Surfers! Be sure to check out the UCC's homepage at www.ucc.org. And don't forget to add your name and e-mail address to the Conference e-mail directory — just drop a note to Cheri Lovell at clovell@emory.edu.



E *Ordained Ministerial Partnership*, a supplement to the *UCC Manual on Ministry* outlining ministerial joint standing in the Disciples of Christ, is available from the UCC Resources, 800/325 7061.

Notes from General Synod —

✓ The UCC voted to enter into full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This move brings the UCC, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Reformed Church in America into a relationship that allows joint celebration of the Lord's Supper and permits ministers to cross denominational lines.

✓ In another action, delegates voted to "reaffirm that the standard for sexual and relational behavior... is fidelity and integrity in marriage and in other covenanted relationships, or singleness, and in all relationships of life." Delegates also...

✓ approved a restructured governance system, consolidating nine national UCC offices into four larger ministry units

✓ re-elected Rev. Paul H. Sherry as President

✓ reaffirmed the role of pastor as teacher

✓ rejected a resolution urging congregations to place a portrait of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in their churches, to avoid the substitution of symbolism for real action against racism

✓ condemned the 1996 Federal Welfare Reform Act as unconscionable and called on churches to learn how the new welfare system will challenge their ministries

✓ called on Congress to close the infamous "School of the Americas" at Ft. Benning, Georgia, some of whose graduates are believed to have been involved in massive human rights violations in their home countries

✓ supported a global ban on land mines

✓ called for an end to female genital mutilation prevalent in Africa and Asia and practiced by immigrants in the U.S. from those regions

✓ Member giving across the UCC increased 6% in the last fiscal year, bringing the total to \$685 million.

✓ The Pension Boards have announced changes in the Health and Dental Benefit Plans for 1998 — be sure to consult the information you received from The Pension Boards for details. Among the changes:

✓ contribution rates for Medicare-eligible participants will increase; non-Medicare rates will not change

✓ out-of-network mental health and substance abuse benefits will be significantly limited

✓ Physician's Assistant services will be covered

✓ continued participation will be extended to 24 mos.

✓ dental rates will increase by 4%

And from across the UCC —

✓ Rev. Harry Bartlett of St. Stephen's UCC in Indiana collects and updates junked computers and gives them to church members who cannot afford new ones. In return, he asks only for a donation in the church's offering plate.

Conference Newsletter Deadline

OCTOBER 20

Atlanta, GA 30308
756 W. Peachtree Street
of the UCC
Southeast
Conference



The Conference Calendar

TIM DOWNS WILL BE VISITING...

Oct 12
St. John's UCC in Cullman, Alabama

Oct 19
Church of the Savior in Knoxville

Oct 26
Central Congregational UCC in Atlanta

Nov 2
Covenant UCC in Columbia, SC

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 14-15
Program Committee Planning Retreat
for all members of all Commission Boards

Jan 9-10
Board of Directors Meeting
at Simpsonwood Conference Center, Norcross GA

Jan 17
OCLL Training Workshop — Crisis Response Teams
at Simpsonwood Conference Center, Norcross GA

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Oct 18
East Alabama/West Georgia Annual Meeting at United Congregational in La Grange, Georgia

Oct 25
GA/SC Executive Committee, 10a at Trinity UCC in Hampton, GA

Dec 5-6
EAL/WGA Ministerial Christmas Party

CLERGY CLUSTER MEETINGS

All clergy are invited to these regional gatherings

- **Greater Atlanta — Nov 6**
12-2:30p, First Congregational UCC, Atlanta
- **Tennessee — Nov 13**
10a-3p EST at Pilgrim Congregational, Chattanooga
- **SC/GA Coast — Nov 18**
5-8p, First Congregational UCC, Savannah
- **South Alabama/NW Florida — Nov 20**
6:30p CST, Andalusia, Alabama

To include your meeting in the calendar, send details to the Conference office by the 15th